

# LSE EDUCATION STRATEGY

2015-2020



# **INTRODUCTION**

***LSE has a global reputation that few institutions can match. This is built upon its founding mission to study and understand all aspects of social experience, with the aspiration to make the world a better place.***

Accomplishing this mission has meant excellence in research, excellence in teaching and excellence in learning. Most importantly for the School's legacy and for its future, these activities have been interconnected. Although called a School, LSE is not simply an institution for teaching and learning. Although committed to outstanding research, neither is it simply a research institute.

The Education Strategy presented here continues this tradition of interaction between research, teaching and learning. These three elements are all important and LSE expects the quality of its educational experience for students to be of an equivalent standard to its research performance as measured by REF.

To this end LSE's Council agreed in 2015 that:

***“...the School expects that all permanent faculty ... will be involved in high quality teaching of LSE students and this will be reflected in contracts of employment as well as review and promotion criteria.”***

This strategy details how the School will develop its educational mission, in concert with its continuing commitment to research. It, and the programme review and renewal encompassed within it, seek to deepen and enhance LSE's educational tradition, improve the experience our taught students have while at the School and prepare them for the increasingly complex and challenging world into which they will graduate.



**Professor Paul Kelly**

Pro-Director Teaching and Learning

# **STRATEGIC VISION 2015-2020**

## ***LSE leads in the provision of research informed social science education***

LSE's founding mission is to contribute to society through an understanding of social, economic and political experience. The School's research develops theoretical understanding, informs policy and frames practice. An LSE education reflects this heritage of theoretically informed, applied research by integrating the cutting edge research and practice of LSE faculty into its range of educational provision.

During the twentieth century, academic departments at LSE made innovative and ground breaking contributions to the teaching of social science disciplines, and to interdisciplinary education. This contribution is varied and rich, ranging from human geography to social psychology, from English School international

relations to the philosophy of scientific method. Most recently, LSE100 has developed an innovative approach to interdisciplinary teaching that is being emulated by other institutions. This strategy outlines a process through which LSE education will continue to lead and innovate during the School's second full century.

The School's vision is that LSE departments offer leading curricula that combine theory and application. To enable this, the School will support a culture that encourages and evaluates developments in education and uses evidence and research to enhance and renew academic courses and programmes. An LSE education will promote interdisciplinary perspectives, while celebrating disciplinary distinctiveness. The School will reward and recognise success in teaching and support experimentation and innovation in learning. One measure of the success of this process is that, by 2020, LSE will be established

within the top 25 per cent of Russell Group universities in the National Student Survey (NSS).

In order to achieve this ambition, we have developed three primary strategic objectives:

- 1.** LSE departments lead in the provision of excellent disciplinary and interdisciplinary education
- 2.** LSE graduates are well informed, critical, analytically sophisticated and globally employable
- 3.** Students and staff interact to build a dynamic learning community that reflects the School's distinctive identity

To achieve these objectives, LSE will show a proportionate increase in investment in education and student experience in each of the five years between 2015 and 2020.

# **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE**

## ***LSE departments lead in the provision of excellent disciplinary and interdisciplinary education***

Educational provision by academic departments will be guided by strong academic leadership as programmes are reviewed and renewed. The School will provide resources, as well as a culture and infrastructure of aspiration and support in terms of the development, enhancement and administration of education. Departments and the School will recognise and reward excellence and innovation in teaching and offer opportunities for academic staff to develop themselves and to create an educational offer for students that is ambitious, challenging and rewarding.

This objective will be achieved through the following range of activities, delivered as appropriate and relevant by LSE's academic departments and professional service units.

### **Review and renewal**

- LSE departments make use of institutional research into students' educational outcomes when reviewing their taught provision
- Departments and the School fund research into disciplinary and interdisciplinary social science education
- Departments benchmark their taught provision against peer departments on the basis of distinctiveness and national quality indicators
- Departments review and, as appropriate, experiment with current teaching approaches and assess how technology can enrich student learning
- The School develops new, flexible teaching spaces through new building and refurbishment
- There is co-development of the School's regulatory frameworks on assessment, academic governance and administration between departments and School committees and divisions

### **Design, development and delivery**

- Funding (commensurate with peer Russell Group institutions) enables staff to engage in the development and renewal of academic programmes and courses, including the following.
- The launch of new Pro-Director "Vision" funding for programme level renewal and development
  - Pay supplements for those teaching large core and service courses
  - The provision of course level development funding and a School wide academic development programme
  - Coordination between APRC funding and ASC reviews and recommendations
  - Integration of LSE Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity initiatives into the design and delivery of LSE taught provision
  - Annual career development meetings that discuss contribution and development as an academic teacher

- Cutting edge approaches to blended education and the enhancement of feedback and assessment through technology across LSE programmes

#### **Reward and recognition**

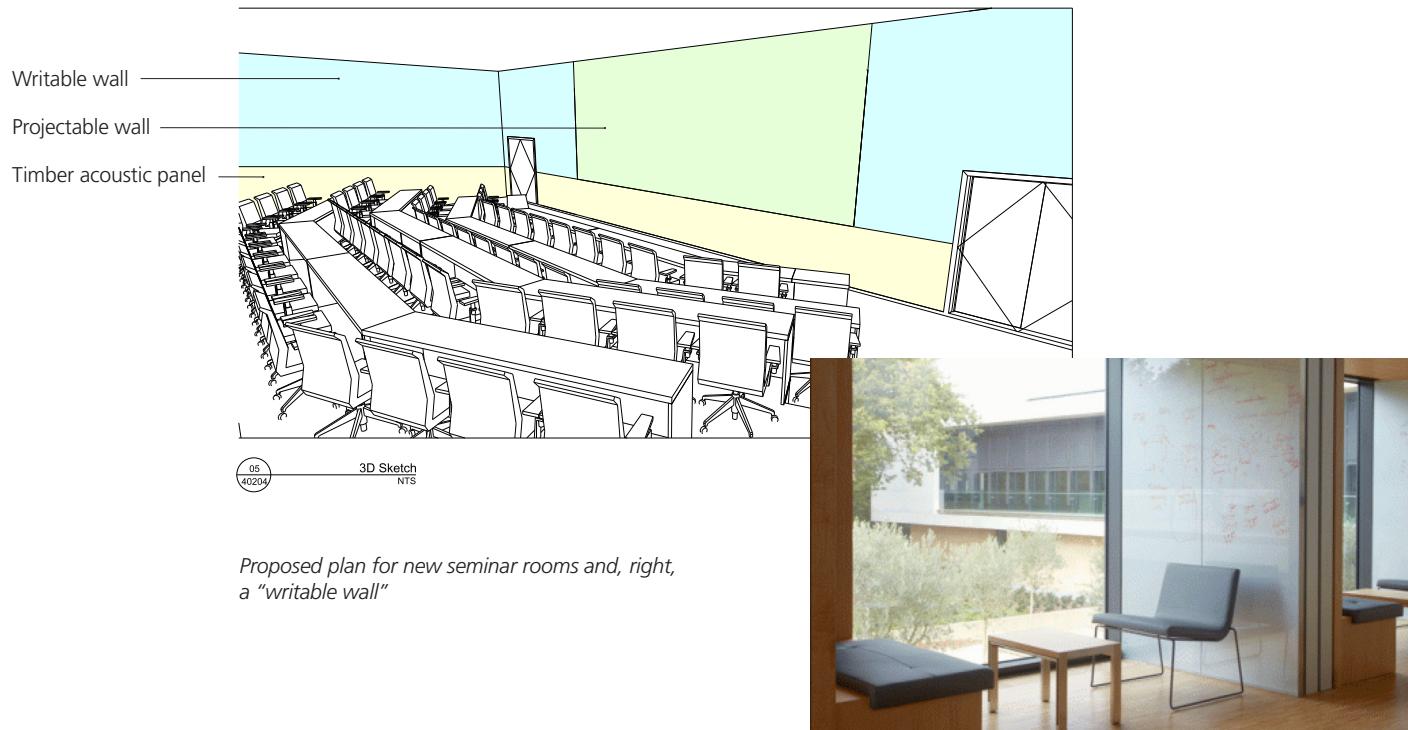
- Departmental teaching prizes are offered in addition to the existing suite of promotion awards. These prizes provide reward and support for those undertaking curricular renewal and who demonstrate successful approaches to teaching and learning in their disciplinary context
- “Teaching contribution” is assessed at promotion in concert with research productivity and institutional citizenship

- There is flexibility over the weighting given to research, teaching contribution and institutional citizenship at annual performance review and promotion, which enables academic staff to focus on developing taught provision as a contribution to career development

#### **KPIs – by 2020**

- The proportion of “good” degrees will match or exceed that of peer Russell Group departments
- 90 per cent of external examiner reports rate student learning in departmental provision as “excellent” or “of a high standard”
- In each department, 85 per cent of all courses will have enhanced course guides that show a rating of between 1.0 and 2.0 in the internal TQARO student surveys across a three year period

- For each department, student survey responses on key internal postgraduate teaching survey and NSS prompts reflect the enhancement of the taught provision. Specifically, responses to key prompts on “Staff are good at explaining things” / “The course was intellectually stimulating” / “Assessment arrangements and marking were fair” / “Feedback on my work has been prompt” / “Feedback on my work helped me to clarify things I didn’t understand” / “I received sufficient advice and support with my studies” will be within the 85-95 per cent range
- LSE reward and recognition of high quality teaching will be commensurate with peer institutions in the Russell Group
- Between 2015 and 2020, there will be renewal of 5 per cent of LSE teaching spaces each year



## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO**

## ***LSE graduates are well informed, critical, analytically sophisticated and globally employable***

LSE aspires to use social science knowledge to improve society. LSE graduates, as well as faculty, are agents in this aspiration. To that end, LSE will ensure that departmental education is of the highest quality and currency. All LSE educational offerings will promote the development of critical reasoning and reflection, as well as leadership and communications skills. In order for our graduates to create as well as critique research findings, all LSE students will be able to engage in applied research.

The following activities, delivered as relevant and appropriate by LSE's academic departments and professional service units, will facilitate achievement of this objective.

### **Review and renewal**

- LSE departments and the School explore twenty-first century themes in academic and professional knowledge, attributes and skills in concert with students, alumni, employers and professional bodies
- Learning and skills development opportunities offered within LSE courses and centrally are reviewed, and successful approaches and techniques are disseminated across the School

### **Design, development and delivery**

- LSE LIFE, a personal and professional development programme, provides students with opportunities to develop academic and communications skills through participation in School wide activities
- LSE programmes embed the development of critical reasoning, problem solving, research and communications skills within and across their courses



- Students have opportunities to conduct applied research across all taught programmes, undertaken as part of group or individual projects
- LSE students have access to high quality language education and global career opportunities
- Central personal and professional development provision complements departmental teaching
- LSE develops new, flexible and inspiring learning and study spaces through new building and refurbishment programmes



### Reward and recognition

- Consideration is given at review and promotion to the setting up and maintenance by academic staff of networks with alumni, employers and professional bodies
- Prizes and recognition are offered for undergraduate and MSc students' research contributions to School wide activities
- Students are given opportunities to present their research at competitive national events



### KPIs – by 2020

- All LSE students will have access to applied research opportunities and methods training at undergraduate and graduate level, as part of coursework or as a component of summative assessment
- Graduate level employment will be maintained at 85 per cent and above
- The Employment Performance Indicator set for LSE by the Higher Education Statistics Agency will be met or exceeded
- Internal postgraduate teaching survey and NSS scores on key prompts are within the 85-95 per cent range. Specifically, these will be the responses to the following prompts: "The programme has improved my employment prospects" / "The programme has improved my decision making in complex and unpredictable situations" / "My communication skills have improved"
- Between 2015 and 2020, there will be renewal of 5 per cent of LSE learning and study spaces each year



# **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE**

## ***Students and staff interact to build a dynamic learning community that reflects the School's distinctive identity***

The School will foster a learning community that creates opportunities for faculty, students, alumni and other stakeholders to interact and build effective networks that sustain and enhance LSE's mission and values. Departments will have an educational culture that is intellectually vibrant and ambitious. The School will support initiatives that celebrate educational development and discovery both within and beyond campus.

Many of the activities listed under Strategic Objectives One and Two feed into the building of a dynamic learning community. The activities listed below are specific, complementary activities that will support the achievement of this objective.

### **Review and renewal**

- Review of the different learning and community building activities offered across LSE programmes and centrally, and dissemination of successful approaches and techniques
- Review of how extracurricular activities develop skills and learning experiences at LSE, with dissemination of successful approaches
- Collaboration between students, staff and alumni to develop and evaluate LSE education

### **Design, development and delivery**

- All departments provide high quality academic advising systems
- Non-campus based learning opportunities (such as field trips, applied research projects and technology enhanced learning) and extracurricular activities that supplement core teaching are funded and integrated into the academic year
- LSE Saturday Schools offer innovative learning experiences and skills development opportunities to internal and external students and alumni
- Joint provision opportunities with partner institutions enhance the learning experiences of students
- Involvement of practitioners and relevant organisations enhances LSE educational provision



### Reward and recognition

- Consideration is given at review and promotion to the embedding of innovative learning, community building and non-campus based activities into LSE programmes by academic staff
- LSE teaching prizes take account of contribution to the development of students' different learning and skills development opportunities
- Prizes and recognition are offered for students who participate in volunteering, mentoring and other community building activities

### KPIs – by 2020

- Improvement in responses to key internal PGT and NSS prompts. Specifically, responses to prompts on "I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies" / "I have been able to contact staff when I need to" will be within the 85-95 per cent band
- Qualitative student feedback on internal surveys and NSS responses will highlight the contribution that the learning community the students have studied within has made to their education
- Between 2015 and 2020, all departments will engage in at least one project per year per programme that links course delivery to alumni or external organizations whose practice informs study in the discipline or research area

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# **PROCESS AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Consultation process**

Consultation for the Education Strategy began with its presentation to LSE Council in September 2015. In Michaelmas Term 2015, the strategy was presented and developed through Departmental Heads Forum, Academic Board and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, before being adopted unanimously by LSE Council at its meeting on 12 January 2016. Student involvement has come from direct consultation with the LSE Students' Union and the integration of departmental student and staff liaison meetings as departments develop their own strategies within the overarching frame of how the School will support and co-develop LSE education, culminating in the launch of an Education Covenant in Lent Term 2016.

### **Implementation and review phases**

The strategy points to the need for departments and the School to explore existing educational provision and experiences. This will involve consulting with academic staff, students and alumni, benchmarking departmental provision against that of peers, and exploring examples of successful teaching and learning within disciplines and in interdisciplinary study. It is expected that departments and the School will use 2015/16 for this review and enquiry, leading to budget round applications to support the establishment of educational improvements and projects during the 2016/17 academic year.

2015/16 will also be a year of developing existing projects and implementing new activities that develop LSE education. The School's teaching and assessment will take

place within a new academic year structure and departments will act on their 2014/15 assessment reviews. New departmental teaching prizes will be offered to recognise and reward excellent teaching and contribution to the review and renewal of programmes prompted by external examiner, staff and student feedback in 2015.

The four years between 2016 and 2020 will involve piloting new activities outlined in the strategy, their evaluation and development and the overall enhancement of LSE education as research led, intellectually demanding and vibrant. To achieve this, LSE will show a proportionate increase in investment in education and student experience in each of the five years between 2015 and 2020.



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